



COLLECTOR'S EDITION
Philatelist with interest in bird stamps builds encyclopedic collection of global birdlife that spans centuries, continents
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BOTTOM'S UP
Despite opposition, Excise Dept set to issue 182 more licences in city though B'luru houses 81% of state's liquor outlets
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As supply of free sanitary napkins at government schools remains stuck in delays due to tendering process hurdles, experts discuss whether it is time to start introducing greener options such as menstrual cups to students

PERIOD TRACKER

Shuchi scheme identifies 19,64,507 beneficiaries, at expenditure of Rs 71.83 crore

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The Karnataka government's Shuchi scheme, which provides free sanitary napkins to students, has been hit by delays this year due to the tendering process for procurement, affecting supply in schools and colleges.

The scheme, which was discontinued in 2020 during the covid-19 pandemic, was revived in January 2024 following directions from the High Court. In 2024-25, sanitary napkins were procured without inviting tenders after the government invoked an exemption under Section 4G of the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements (KTPP) Act, 1999.

However, for the current year, the government has opted for a regular tender process, resulting in delays in supply. Replying to a question raised by Congress MLC Madhu G Madegowda during the ongoing session of the Legislature, Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dinesh Gundu Rao said that the Cabinet has approved continuation of the Shuchi programme

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“After a year or two of schoolgirls getting used to the fact of having periods once in a month and knowing how to maintain the genital hygiene, slowly we can, at the ages of 15 or 16, introduce them to the menstrual cup and show them how eco-friendly it is

—Dr Rubina Shanawaz, gynaecologist

Rs 27 lakh gone in 1 hour

Data reveals that each year money lost to cybercrime is going up by leaps and bounds, while convictions still remain low



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Bengaluru, the IT hub of India, continues to be the epicentre of cyber fraud in Karnataka, with citizens facing staggering financial losses every hour. In 2023, the city's residents were losing approximately ₹7.75 lakh every hour due to cybercrime.

The following year, 2024, saw this number skyrocket to nearly ₹22.7 lakh per hour, reflecting a dramatic surge in the value of frauds, even though the total number of cases remained relatively stable. For 2025, data available up to November 15 indicates that Bengaluru is already losing about ₹27.8 lakh every hour, a 23 percent increase over the same period in 2024. The figures highlight that while the growth in the number of cases has been moderate, the monetary stakes of each cybercrime are growing alarmingly.

According to the data presented by Home Minister G Parameshwara in the Legislative Council recently, there is a steady increase in cyber fraud cases in Karnataka, with Bengaluru bearing the brunt. In 2023, the city registered 17,818 cyber fraud cases, nearly 80 percent of the state's 22,255 complaints. By 2024, Bengaluru recorded 17,863 cases; a marginal rise of just 0.25 percent but

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THINGS TO DO

01 Journey of life

Kalagangotri Team is presenting 'Sooji Mallige', a heartfelt social drama filled with emotion and values, narrating the tale of a couple—two lives intertwined, walking hand in hand through the journey of togetherness. **Where:** Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar; **When:** December 31, 7.30 pm

02 Unlimited entertainment



Olympian Circus, one of India's grandest circus extravaganzas, now featuring world-class international artists from across the

globe, is bringing breathtaking performances and non-stop entertainment for all. **Where:** Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; **When:** December 25, 26 and 28

03 Curtain call

Piyush Mishra will be performing live as part of the Aarambh 2.0 India Tour, redefining live performance by blending music, poetry, and theatre into an unforgettable experience. **Where:** Phoenix Marketcity, Whitefield; **When:** January 17, 7 pm



04 Festive vibes

This festive season, SOCIAL is dialing up the chaos with a high-energy Christmas Eve celebration, inviting all to show up, dress up, and dance it out. **Where:** All SOCIAL outlets in Bengaluru; **When:** December 24, 7 pm

05 Timeless tales

Bangalore Little Theatre is presenting a stage adaptation of the 2nd-century Tamil epic following the fateful journey of Kannagi, the devoted wife of Kovalan, and her timeless legend about chastity, truth, and the devastating cost of injustice. **Where:** Jagriti Theatre, Whitefield; **When:** February 7, 8, 3.30 pm and 7.30 pm



Decades of pursuit, stamped in time

Philatelist talks about journey of accumulating over 50,000 stamps, highlighting his special interest towards bird stamps, owning nearly 18,000 of them, which are on display at his latest exhibition

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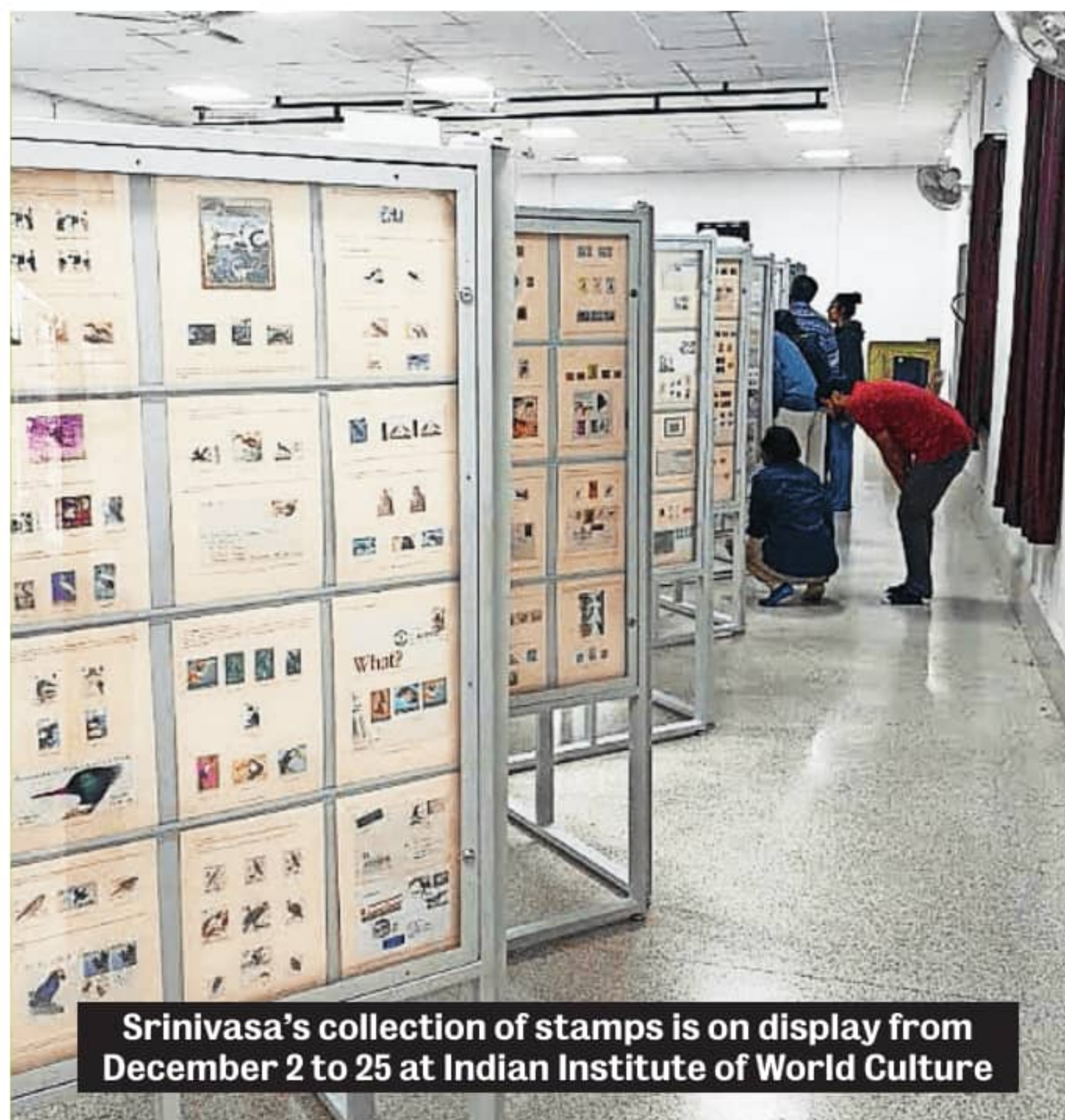
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A quiet visit to the Bengaluru General Post Office nearly four decades ago has today grown into one of India's most fascinating themed stamp collections. Philatelist Ramu M Srinivasa, whose passion lies in bird stamps, has built a collection that spans centuries, continents, and even extinct species of birds into a living encyclopedia of global birdlife.

Srinivasa's journey into philately began in 1986, when his mother took him to the Philatelic Bureau at the Bengaluru GPO. "That visit changed everything. Later, my mother gave me my grandfather's stamp collection. That is when my serious interest began. My thematic focus on birds took shape around 1988, guided by my mentor, the late Dr RG Sangoram," he said.

What started as a hobby soon became a lifelong pursuit. Today he owns around 50,000 stamps across various themes, of which nearly 25,000 are bird stamps. About 18,000 different bird stamps are currently displayed in his exhibition, Inddak, held at Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavanagudi, between December 2 to 25, documenting a journey of almost four decades of collecting stamps.

"In the early years, till about the millennium, my collection grew mainly through exchanges, visiting stamp exhibitions,



Srinivasa's collection of stamps is on display from December 2 to 25 at Indian Institute of World Culture

and meeting dealers. Once my professional life settled, I began acquiring stamps through auctions and even buying entire collections from other collectors," he said. He highlighted that his travels to Europe and Southeast Asia also helped him meet international dealers and fellow philatelists.

Beyond their visual appeal, bird stamps play a crucial role in education and conservation awareness. Srinivasa said according to the International Ornithological Congress, there are over 250 bird families and around 10,000 species worldwide. "India alone has more than 1,200 spe-

cies. In philately, close to 30,000 bird stamps have been released so far. The exhibition showcases 120 bird families and over 2,300 species, including prehistoric, extinct, and endangered birds, many of which people may never see in the wild," he said.

A member of the Karnataka Philatelic Society, which has over 1,000 members, Srinivasa credits the community for nurturing his interest. "The philatelic deposit account at the GPO, society meetings, and interactions with dealers kept my journey alive," he said.

Among the items in his collection are letters from Sweden

dating back to the 1820s and 1830s, where bird feathers were used to signal urgency. The oldest stamp in his collection is from Western Australia from the 1860s. Stamps depicting extinct birds like the dodo are also featured. "These pieces are powerful reminders of what we have lost," Srinivasa noted, referring to historical accounts such as Emperor Jehangir's records and artist Ustad Mansur's illustrations of the dodo.

The collection also includes unusual artefacts such as licences for shooting birds in America.

Stamps tell stories, acting as cultural ambassadors, collectively forming snippets of living encyclopedia, says philatelist

"Every stamp has a story to tell. They are cultural ambassadors. Together, they become snippets of an encyclopedia," he said.

His current exhibition, Let's Go Birding, a collaborative effort with stamp collectors Jagannath Mani and Naveen OC, is a bird-themed stamp exhibition, showcasing over 18,000 postage stamps from across the world.

Srinivasa observed that exhibitions have the potential to spark curiosity and foster learning. "I always advocate philately as cognitive learning. Exhibitions are gateways that open your eyes and make you want to learn more," he said.

State govt reminds employees to keep attire professional, decent

The state government has once again issued strict instructions making decent attire compulsory for all government employees and officers while attending office duties. Acting on public complaints that staff were reporting to offices in inappropriate outfits, the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms has issued a detailed circular reiterating earlier directions on discipline, decorum, punctuality, efficiency, transparency and courteous behaviour towards the public. The department has made it clear that non-compliance with these instructions will invite appropriate disciplinary action.

ate disciplinary action.

The circular also directs senior officers to closely monitor and regulate staff movements, particularly unauthorised absence from offices during working hours. Recalling the revised guidelines issued in 2013, the government has emphasised that employees must wear attire that upholds the dignity of public service. If officials need to step out during office hours for unavoidable reasons, they must obtain prior approval from their superiors and record the purpose in the movement register. "Strict adherence to office timings, proper maintenance of movement and cash declaration registers, and regular supervision by higher authorities have been mandated to ensure accountability and discipline in government offices," stated the circular. — BMB

When Santa brought the gift of compassion

Around 200 bikers dressed as Santa Claus gathered at HMT Playground near RT Nagar in Bengaluru on Sunday morning to raise public awareness about autism. The bike rally, organised by She For Society, a women-led non-governmental organisation, in association with Ration Room, aimed to create awareness among the public about autism and extend moral support to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The grand Christmas-themed bike rally witnessed the enthusiastic participation of around 200 bikers dressed as Santa Claus, who rode together across the streets of Bengaluru, spreading the message of inclusion, compassion, and the joy of giving.

The rally featured bikes beautifully decorated with Christmas bells, holly, and Santa-themed accessories, creating a vibrant festive atmosphere across

the city while drawing attention to an important social cause. The initiative highlighted how celebrations can be meaningfully aligned with social responsibility. Speaking with Bangalore Mirror, Harshini Venkatesh, Founder of She For Society, said that participants wanted to create awareness among the public on autism and spend some time with children with ASD. "The purpose of the bike rally is to extend moral support to children with ASD. We have been organising bike rallies for a cause," said Venkatesh.

Appreciating the bikers for participating in the rally, Manjunath SP, Chief Executive Officer of Ration Room, noted that entertainment programmes were organised for children with ASD. "We thought it right to host children with ASD. We arranged lunch and Christmas celebrations at the Ration Room for them," said Manjunath. The



organisers expressed their gratitude to all the bikers, volunteers, partners, and media representatives for their support in making the event a memorable success. The Christmas Bike Ride stood as a powerful reminder that collective effort can create meaningful change.

"I came from Marathahalli to participate in the bike rally. I am very happy to be part of this rally," said Tejas K, who suffers from muscular dystrophy.

— Y Maheswara Reddy

Indian students chase ROI over global rankings

Germany UAE New Zealand emerge top study destinations driven by cost benefits visas AI-focused curricula

With evolving dynamics for those studying abroad, particularly amid global economic pressures and changing visa policies, a new report has revealed that affordability and post-study work opportunities are now among the most critical factors shaping student choices.

The top priorities driving student decisions today are affordability, post-study work options, and the growing impact of artificial intelligence in education, according to a report by Leap Scholar, an AI-powered study abroad ecosystem. The findings are based on interactions with more than three million students exploring overseas education opportunities.

The report highlights a sharp surge in Indian student interest in several non-traditional destinations. Germany recorded a 377 per cent



year-on-year increase in interest for the 2024-25 academic cycle, up from 219 per cent the previous year. New Zealand saw a dramatic 2,900 per cent year-on-year growth from a low base of 6 per cent, while the UAE witnessed a 5,400 per cent rise compared to 7 per cent earlier.

According to the report,

Germany's appeal is driven by its 18-month post-study work visa and strong employment prospects. The UAE is attracting students due to lower costs compared to Western universities, geographical accessibility, and expanding education hubs. New Zealand's immigration policies, including a post-study work visa

allowing graduates to live and work for up to three years, have also made it an increasingly preferred destination.

"It's no longer a question of affordability alone; it's also about what students gain after completing their degree. The data shows students are making calculated decisions based on return on investment, not just institutional prestige," said Leap Scholar co-founder Arnav Kumar.

The report highlights a shift in curriculum choices. While 40.4 per cent enrol in specialised Master's programmes in artificial intelligence, machine learning, or data science, a larger 59.6 per cent prefer broader Master's degrees integrating AI modules, enabling skill diversification and adaptability across sectors such as business, engineering, and health-care.

PTI

UVCE seeks top ECE faculty

The University of Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE), Bengaluru, has invited applications for Guest Faculty positions in the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering for the academic year 2025-26.

Selected candidates will teach B Tech and M Tech students at the KR Circle campus. Applicants must hold a Master's degree or PhD in relevant subjects as per AICTE norms. Interested candidates should download the application form from the UVCE website and submit it with supporting documents to the Registrar's office by December 29, 2025.

BMB

Gender inclusion drive at universities

Higher education institutions nationwide have been directed to organise dedicated programmes for girl students and women employees to strengthen gender inclusion under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) emphasised that promoting women's participation in higher education is essential not only for achieving gender equality but also for fostering India's overall growth and development. The UGC has urged colleges and universities to conduct conferences, seminars, workshops and awareness programmes on gender

sensitisation, leadership development, and women empowerment. Institutions are encouraged to involve members of the National Commission for Women, Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women, and retired senior government officials in these initiatives.

The goal is to create a more supportive and accessible ecosystem for women in education, research, innovation, and entrepreneurship, ensuring that policies translate into meaningful opportunities and participation for women across higher education institutions.

BMB

AI enters classrooms under NEP 2020

Artificial intelligence has moved from the periphery of policy discussions to the centre of India's school-level reforms, with the government informing Parliament that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is reshaping classrooms to build digital fluency and AI-aligned competencies.

While foundational literacy and numeracy remain the starting point, officials emphasised that learning is now being paired with technological preparedness to support students.

Platforms such as DIKSHA host thousands of curated learning resources, including structured digital content, teacher training modules and interactive tools strengthening conceptual clarity and confidence in technology-enabled learning. This digital push runs alongside the NIPUN Bharat Mission, which focuses on

achieving foundational learning by Grade 3 and is increasingly integrating digital and AI-friendly pedagogies.

Officials noted that the e-Jaadui Pitara app and its physical kits promote play-based learning while familiarising children with visual, interactive and exploratory methods aligned with emerging AI-based learning ecosystems. To ensure inclusivity, primers in 121 local languages are being deployed so the digital shift does not dilute mother-tongue instruction, a core NEP principle.

The transition into formal schooling is supported through Vidya Pravesh, a three-month preparatory module that has reached over 4.2 crore students, introducing structured digital environments at an appropriate pace, nationwide rollout.

BMB

Government nudges schools toward digital payments

The Union government has signalled a stronger shift toward digital transactions within the school system, urging States and Union Territories to accelerate adoption of UPI-based fee collection.

In a statement before Parliament, Minister of State for Education Jayant Choudhary said the Centre is committed to expanding digital payments to improve "Ease of Living" for families and "Ease of Schooling" for institutions.

Although education is on the Concurrent List, with implementation resting with States and UTs, the Centre expects schools to align with India's expanding digital financial infrastructure.

Choudhary said no national-level study has yet assessed how many government, aided and

private schools use UPI or other digital modes for fees. The absence of consolidated data highlights uneven adoption, with digital payments concentrated in urban areas while many rural schools rely on cash or offline banking.

To encourage uniformity, the Ministry of Education issued an advisory on October 10, 2025, urging States and UTs to explore digital systems for collecting admission, examination and other fees.

The advisory noted that digital transactions improve speed, transparency and security, reduce manual paperwork, ease administrative burdens on schools and enhance convenience and accountability for parents nationwide.

Officials reiterated timelines would depend on state-level readiness alone.

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 Indian Institute of Science



Presided by:

Dr. M.R. Jayaram

Hon'ble Chancellor, RUAS

Gnanagangothri Campus (GGC): University House, New BEL Road, MSR Nagar, Bengaluru - 560 054.

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SCAN TO KNOW MORE



De-weeding drive offers fresh hope for YMC Lake

After years of neglect, YMC Lake de-weeding begins, raising hopes for cleaner waters, restored ecology, and sustained civic accountability

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If all goes well, Yele Mallappa Chetty (YMC) Lake is expected to be free from weeds within a month, offering long-awaited relief to residents and environmentalists. The lake has been in the news for the wrong reasons in recent years, including unchecked weed growth, debris accumulation, sewage inflow and encroachment along its periphery. The de-weeding process has already begun, and officials are confident that the lake will be cleaned and restored within the stipulated timeframe. "The trials of the machines used for de-weeding began on Saturday, and the actual work will begin on Monday. A Hyderabad-based agency has been assigned to clear weeds from the lake, and the agency is expected to complete the work within a month," said Minor

Irrigation Department Assistant Executive Engineer Vasu.

He said the department had taken up de-weeding of the lake on a priority basis, given its deteriorating condition. "As of now, only de-weeding work is being undertaken. We are yet to estimate the total cost involved in this exercise," the assistant executive engineer added.

Bangalore Mirror had earlier published a report titled Will the real custodian please stand up? on December 16, highlighting how the transition phase of civic agencies had proved to be one of the most difficult periods for the city's lakes. The report described how YMC Lake had been completely taken over by garbage dumping and debris, triggering serious concern among residents, environmentalists and lake volunteers.

"I welcome the de-weeding of the lake. It is our tribute to Yele Mallappa Chetty, the philanthropist who constructed the lake in the nineteenth century"

— Balaji Raghotham, Lake activist

Residents and lake activists have welcomed the commencement of de-weeding but urged the government to ensure the work is completed without interruption or delay. They stressed that authorities should not stop with weed removal alone and must also take up other developmental works, including de-silting and fencing, to ensure long-term protection of the lake.

Describing the start of de-weeding as a moment of immense pride and satisfaction, Kayaking and Canoeing Association of Karnataka Sec-



Garbage dumping and encroachment threaten lake recovery efforts, residents caution

retary Capt. Deleep Kumar said the long-awaited cleaning of YMC Lake officially commenced on Saturday. "This significant step marks a new beginning for the lake and brings renewed hope to the water sports fraternity. The successful initiation of this work would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of the entire Minor Irrigation Department. Their continued support will ensure that water sports training can continue in the future without hindrance," he said.

Lake activist Balaji Raghotham said the beginning of de-weeding would motivate existing lake volunteers and encourage more residents to participate. "I welcome the de-weeding of the lake. It is our tribute to Yele Mallappa Chetty, the philanthropist who constructed the lake in the nineteenth century. I want the authorities to complete fencing to prevent further encroachment of lake land," he said.

Resident Shubhajit Ghosh also welcomed the move, calling it en-



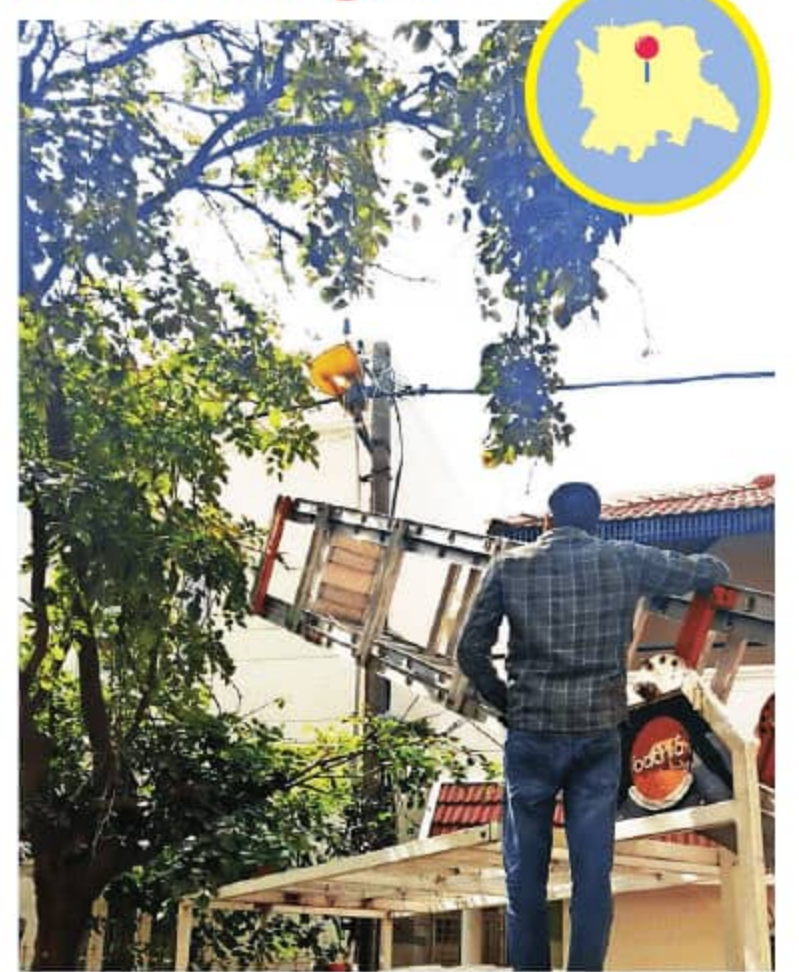
couraging news. He thanked the Minor Irrigation Department but stressed that the effort must be supported by complementary actions. He said garbage dumped around the lake and along both sides of NH-75 must be removed immediately.

Ghosh added that encroachments must be cleared and fencing resumed without delay to permanently prevent land grabbing. "Equally critical is stopping sewage inflow into the lake, failing which the de-weeding exercise may be rendered futile. Protecting this lake requires a holistic and sustained approach, not isolated interventions," he said.

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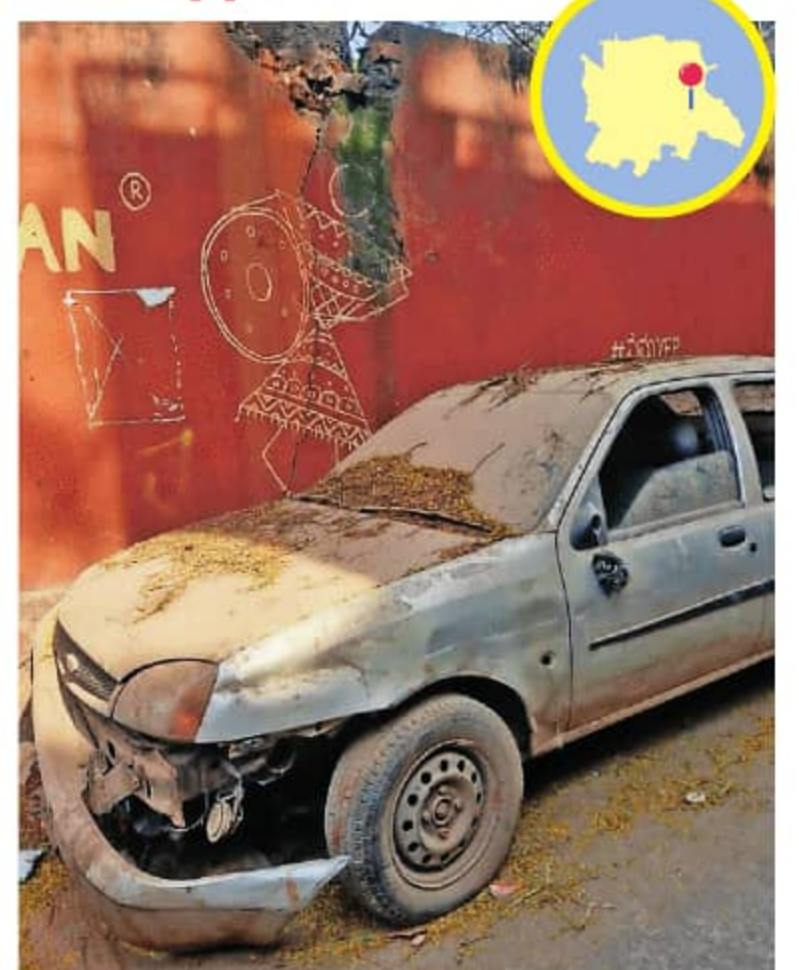
Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

Light restored Sahakar Nagar



Following a complaint in this column, GBA officials quickly fixed the broken streetlight at Sahakar Nagar, restoring proper illumination for residents.

Traffic snarl Bannappa Park Road



A wrecked car abandoned on the narrow Bannappa Park Road, an alternative to Kempegowda Road and Cubbonpet Main Road, is creating major traffic disruption.

Congestion alert ITI Layout



Autos and cars parked at corners and in no-parking zones are causing severe traffic congestion on the ITI Layout entrance road from Kathriguppe Main Road.

Threat looms over Narasipura Lake buffer zone

Vidyaranyapura residents and lake activists protest building plans, demand lake expansion, sewage control, and protection of Narasipura Lake's buffer zone

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Residents of Vidyaranyapura and lake activists have expressed concern about the proposal to construct a building on a buffer zone of Narasipura Lake. They were shocked and surprised to come across cleaning and levelling of the land adjacent to the lake.

Though they have succeeded in halting the work temporarily, they are worried about the buffer zone of the water body. They said that a sewage treatment plant (STP) was constructed on the land and it became defunct two decades ago. They opposed the construction of any structure on the buffer zone.

Expressing concern over the plan of constructing a building at

the buffer zone, Madhuri Subbarao, a resident, said that she wants the authorities concerned to extend the lake water up to the land where construction works are planned. "Extension of the lake will increase the lake's water holding capacity. It will be better if a walking path is developed around the place to prevent encroachment of the buffer zone," said Madhuri Subbarao.

The residents want the authorities concerned to protect the lake. They blamed the authorities for allowing construction of a structure without taking measures either to repair the defunct STP or to construct a new STP. "I want the authorities concerned not to allow construction of any structure on the buffer zone. All these years, the land became a destination to dump all types of garbage and debris. Around 500 people



Construction activities at buffer zone of Narasipura Lake

visit Narasipura Lake every day for a walk. We planted saplings on the lake bund more than a decade ago. As of now, the construction of the building is stopped. I do not know what will happen in future," said Gopalakrishna H, a resident.

Emphasising the need to save and preserve Narasipura Lake, Krishna KS, a resident, said the STP was established by BEL and later handed over to the BWSSB. "I want the authorities to take measures to stop sewage entering the lake and ensure

no construction of structures on the buffer zone. We have enquired with the BWSSB engineers about the proposal to construct a building, but they feigned ignorance," Krishna said.

The residents have also complained to the Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner about the ongoing construction activities at the buffer zone. Officials have been urged to conduct a joint inspection and ensure permanent protection of the lake ecosystem.

Adding another round to city's overflowing liquor market

State plans to put 182 more liquor licences up for grabs even as B'luru accounts for 81% of K'taka's liquor outlets, reflecting city's growing booze landscape

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Despite opposition from women's organisations, the Excise Department has issued a notification for the e-auction of vacant and available liquor shop licences across the state. Of the 569 bar licences being auctioned across Karnataka, a maximum of 182 are in Bengaluru and successful bidders will receive licences valid for five years. As of now, Bengaluru accounts for a significant share of Karnataka's liquor service infrastructure, with a total of 789 retail and licensed outlets across the North and South divisions, representing around 80.5 per cent of the state's 979 Retail Vending Bars (RVBs). The North division has 307 outlets, while the South division hosts 482. Independent RVBs in Bengaluru number 446, more than two-thirds of the state total of 499, highlighting the city's dominant role in liquor distribution.

Licence breakdown

Among different licence categories, Bengaluru's share is substantial. The city's clubs operate under CL-4 licence number 28 (North 15, South 13) out of 41 statewide. Star hotels (CL-6A) have 32 licences in Bengaluru (North 13, South 19) out of 37 in Karnataka. Hotels and boarding houses under CL-7 licence total 228 in Bengaluru (North 99, South 129) compared with 326 statewide. Airport liquor licences (CL-17) in Bengaluru are 26 (North 23, South 3) out of 64 across Karnataka. This concentration indicates that Bengaluru alone accommodates over 80 per cent of the state's formal liquor-serving infrastructure.

Safety protocols

Excise Minister RB Timmapur stressed that all beer produced in breweries is cleared for human consumption only after chemical analysis. The tests confirm the presence of ethyl alcohol while ensuring absence of methanol, obnoxious



Bidding process for e-auction of vacant and available liquor shop licences across state to begin December 22

182 bar licences in B'luru to be auctioned

Despite opposition from women's organisations, the Excise Department has issued a notification for the e-auction of vacant and available liquor shop licences across the state. Bidder registration will begin on December 22, followed by training sessions for prospective bidders and district-level e-auction nodal officers from December 23 to January 7. The live auction process will be held between January 13 and 20. The

licences include long-pending, suspended, cancelled and non-renewed permits earlier under the 1987 CL-9 restaurant quota, now reclassified as CL-2A and CL-90, with the department expecting revenue of over Rs 700 crore. Base licence prices have been fixed between Rs 1 crore and Rs 1.5 crore depending on whether the outlet falls under municipal, corporation or the Greater Bengaluru Authority limits.

ous substances, and suspended sediments. The state currently operates two approved chemical laboratories; the Bengaluru lab is functional, while Dharwad's lab is being commissioned. No private laboratory partnerships exist for this process.

Sales data

Beer sales from these outlets remain robust. According to the minister, draft

beer sales in Karnataka reached 80.89 lakh litres in 2023-24 and 77.97 lakh litres in 2024-25. With Bengaluru alone hosting nearly half of all RVBs, the city contributes a major portion of these sales, underscoring its role as the state's primary liquor consumption hub. The data reflects both the scale of liquor infrastructure in Bengaluru and the regulatory oversight ensuring product safety before it reaches consumers.

CRIME FILES

Three held in suspected honour killing

A 25-year-old labourer was brutally murdered on Thursday in a suspected case of honour killing linked to a long-standing love affair. The victim was allegedly targeted by his own uncle and two accomplices after they grew increasingly hostile toward the relationship.

The conflict arose from the victim Cheluvvaraju's four-year relationship with his uncle's daughter. Despite constant threats and opposition from the woman's family, the young man remained defiant. Tensions reached a breaking point recently when Cheluvvaraju uploaded a video to Facebook, publicly declaring that he would never abandon his partner, regardless of the pressure.

According to police, this digital declaration of love infuriated the woman's father and relatives, prompting them to hatch a deadly conspiracy. On the afternoon of December 18, 2025, the suspects reportedly lured Cheluvvaraju into a car in Kunigal town. They drove him to a secluded area between Gattipur and Aralikatte Doddi in Magadi taluk, where they allegedly slit his throat with a machete.

Acting on a formal complaint filed by the victim's brother, Anna Raju, the Kunigal police moved swiftly to apprehend the suspects. The arrested individuals have been identified as 48-year-old carpenter Kempanarasimhayya, 40-year-old Manjunath C, and 40-year-old Ramakrishna. Investigators confirmed that they have recovered the getaway vehicle and the weapons used in the crime.

-BMB

Social media accounts booked for obscenity

The Central Division Cyber Crime Police in Bengaluru have registered an FIR against 28 social media accounts for allegedly promoting obscene videos across various digital platforms. The action follows a private complaint filed by a social media user, prompting authorities to launch a formal investigation into the accounts that have been using explicit content to drive traffic and increase follower counts.

According to the police, the accused utilised platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to share screenshots and short clips of obscene videos, paired with enticing captions. The investigation revealed that the account holders urged followers to comment or send direct messages for access to the full versions, or directed them to "links in bio" that led straight to adult websites.

Law enforcement officials expressed deep concern over the trend, noting that social media is used by individuals of all ages, including children. They highlighted that even users clicking out of curiosity are being redirected to pornographic material, creating a significant social risk. The police emphasised that this tactic—using illicit content to boost engagement—is a dangerous practice that exposes vulnerable users to harmful material.

The Central CEN Crime Police Station has booked the owners of the 28 identified links under various sections of the Information Technology (IT) Act. Officials warned that these illegal activities, aimed at gaining 'clout' and increasing followers, will face strict legal consequences. Further investigation is currently underway to track the individuals behind these profiles and curb the spread of such content.

-BMB

Digital friendship turns into harassment nightmare

A 32-year-old homemaker from Bengaluru has filed a formal complaint with the Rajagopalnagar police after a digital friendship devolved into a nightmare of sexual harassment and extortion. The woman first connected with the accused, Paritosh Yadav, through social media, where the two built a rapport that eventually led to a financial transaction during a family emergency.

The situation escalated when the victim's daughter was severely injured in a domestic gas cylinder leak.

Facing mounting medical bills, the woman accepted a loan of Rs 30,000 from Yadav. According to police reports, what appeared to be an act of kindness was actually a calculated move; Yadav allegedly began using the debt as leverage, relentlessly pressuring the woman into a physical relationship and subjecting her to ongoing mental torment.

The ordeal took a heavy toll on the victim's personal life, leading to severe marital friction once her husband became aware of the situation.

Overwhelmed by the harassment and the strain on her marriage, the woman tragically attempted to take her own life at a friend's residence in Peenya. Fortunately, her friends prevented the tragedy, allowing her the chance to seek justice.

The Rajagopalnagar police have since registered a case against Paritosh Yadav. Authorities are currently investigating the allegations of sexual harassment and criminal intimidation to ensure the accused is held accountable for his actions.

-BMB

Violent confrontation follows truck driver's drunken rampage

A chaotic Sunday afternoon in Anekal taluk ended in a violent confrontation after a truck driver, allegedly under the influence of alcohol, went on a destructive spree across several neighborhoods.

The driver, identified as 35-year-old Prem, was operating an Uttar Pradesh-registered heavy vehicle when he reportedly lost control, ramming into more than six vehicles and leaving a trail of wreckage in his wake.

The incident began near a warehouse in Attibele, as the truck headed toward Chandapura first had a collision in Anekal town, where two individuals sustained serious injuries. Rather than stopping to

provide aid, the driver allegedly sped away, sparking a 10-kilometre pursuit. His flight from the scene resulted in further accidents, including collisions with three vehicles in the Surya City area and an additional crash within the Attibele police jurisdiction.

The pursuit finally came to an end when frustrated members of the public and local police successfully intercepted the vehicle. Before being taken into official custody, the driver was reportedly thrashed by an angry mob. He is currently receiving medical treatment for injuries sustained during the confrontation, while the two initial victims are fortunately reported to be out of danger.

The Anekal police have registered a case of rash and negligent driving. Investigations are ongoing to determine the full extent of the damage caused.

-BMB

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'339 families relocated from different hamlets'

Act violated, forest dwellers can be relocated or compensated only after their claims have been verified and approved, say experts

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The Kali Tiger Reserve relocation project is once again under scrutiny following the Karnataka assembly session on December 18. Responding to a query regarding the relocation project, Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre stated that between 2022 and 2025, a total of 339 families were relocated from various hamlets under 10 Gram Panchayats. Of these, 99 families' claims under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) were either rejected or remained pending.

Conservationists and activists argue that these relocations violate the FRA, the guidelines of the National Tiger Conservation Authority, and the Wildlife Protection Act.

Under the FRA, forest dwellers can only be relocated or compensated after their claims are verified

and approved. Payment of compensation without prior recognition and settlement of forest rights constitutes a direct violation of the Act, which explicitly prohibits displacement or relocation without legally recognised rights and informed consent. "It is akin to paying encroachers," said a wildlife conservationist.

Experts point out that such payments effectively regularise encroachment using public funds

According to the Wildlife Protection Act, the FRA 2006, and NTCA guidelines, relocating forest-dwelling communities requires the concerned Gram Panchayat to convene a Gram Sabha and obtain consent

while undermining the statutory, rights-based framework of forest governance. Regarding Gram Sabha proceedings during 2022-25, the Minister submitted a single Gram Sabha resolution dating back to



2014. According to the Wildlife Protection Act, the FRA 2006, and NTCA guidelines, relocating forest-dwelling communities requires the concerned Gram Panchayat to convene a Gram Sabha and obtain consent. Only after this can proposals be submitted to the District-level Committee, headed by the Deputy Commissioner. "No Gram Sabha records were produced for the remaining nine Gram Panchayats, nor for the actual period when relocations were executed. The 99 families with

pending or rejected claims were paid Rs 12 crore 17 lakh in compensation. The government and forest department have promoted Kali relocation as a model program nationwide. However, statutory mandates are not being followed," said the conservationist. Recently, in response to a Right to Information application, eight Gram Sabhas in the Kali Tiger Reserve clarified that the relocation program was conducted without their consent, a clear violation of multiple legal requirements.

GBA rebranding: 58 logo designs ready

As part of a rebranding exercise, the Greater Bengaluru Authority and five formed city corporations will receive new logos, with 58 draft designs prepared. More than three-and-a-half months after the GBA and corporations were

constituted, logos are yet to be finalised. Officials said multiple draft designs for the GBA and five corporations are ready and will be placed before the Deputy Chief Minister, who holds the Bengaluru Development portfolio, for approval. Once cleared, selected designs will be formally adopted and used across all platforms.

Sources said proposed logos draw from Bengaluru's history and heritage, retaining the Kempegowda-era boundary tower featured in the for-

mer BBMP emblem. While the boundary tower remains common, each corporation is given distinct identity through inclusion of its geographical map and unique visual motifs. Designs range from heritage-inspired to contemporary styles, using colours including gold, green, yellow, saffron, white, and blue to enhance appeal. Logos were created by Chitrakala Parishath students as an academic project, under guidance of the Public Works Department chief architect, per officials. — BMB

ISRO tests drogue parachutes successfully

ISRO has achieved a major milestone in India's first human space-flight mission, Gaganyaan, with the successful qualification tests of the critical drogue parachutes that ensure the safe landing of astronauts. Officials said the tests represent a decisive step in validating the deceleration system of the crew module, designed to return astronauts safely to Earth. The qualification trials were conducted on December 18 and 19 at DRDO's Ballistic Research Laboratory Rail Track and Rocket Sled facility in Chandigarh.

A total of 20 parachutes of four types will be deployed sequentially to progressively slow down the crew module during atmospheric re-entry.



Gaganyaan mission tests critical landing safety systems

As the module descends, the parachutes deploy in a planned sequence, controlling speed and stabilising the vehicle. ISRO has successfully demonstrated the functioning of the Apex Cover Separation Parachutes and the Drogue Parachutes as part of this system. Meanwhile, ISRO is preparing to launch the LVM3-M6 rocket on December 24 from the second launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre. This heavy-lift launch vehicle, capable of carrying higher payloads, will play a key role in future Gaganyaan operations, bringing India closer to its maiden crewed spaceflight. — BMB

Empty drive

Karnataka Legislative Council saw a quirky mix-up when a pendrive meant to provide answers on the employment guarantee scheme turned out to be empty, leaving the government red-faced. Member KS Naveen had asked about employment guarantee details in Chitradurga last week, and the Secretariat had promised a response, handing him a pendrive the next day. However, the pendrive contained no data, and officers took it back promising to give the correct one but four to five days passed with no update. Naveen raised the issue during the last week's session, prompting Deputy Chairman Pranesh to express dissatisfaction with the delay. Finally, as proceedings ended, the officials handed over the proper pendrive to Naveen, closing the brief episode of technological glitch.

Name game

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has firmly stated that the name of Bengaluru's Raj Bhavan cannot be changed to Lok Bhavan, stressing that the building is state government property and its historic name will remain intact. He criticised the central government's attempts to rename iconic institutions, calling it "politics of spite." Siddaramaiah also took a dig at the renaming of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) to "G Ram G," saying, "The BJP has never had respect for

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Mahatma Gandhi, Ambedkar, or the poor. Now they are even copying our five guarantee schemes." He noted that numerous central bodies have been renamed in recent years, with political motives often overshadowing practical governance, while issues like inflation and fiscal management remain neglected.

Thank you, opposition

School Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa recently expressed gratitude to opposition members, crediting them for his "success" as a minister. He quipped that there is a saying in politics: if you want to end someone's political career, make them the Education Minister, given the sheer scale and scrutiny of the role. However, he added, thanks to the opposition's constant criticism, he became stronger during his first stint of a Cabinet Minister as School Education Minister, proving the rumours wrong and turning challenges into achievements, ultimately emerging as a successful minister.



Funds fundu

During a heated Assembly discussion on the delay in Gruhalakshmi payments, Rajnagar MLA S Suresh Kumar drew a colourful com-

parison with Haider Ali's salary practices. He recalled how the 18th-century ruler would pay his soldiers on time in January but then start delaying salaries by five-day increments in subsequent months—February on the 5th, March on the 10th, April on the 15th, May on the 20th, sometimes even skipping a month entirely. Suresh Kumar lamented that the current delays in Gruhalakshmi disbursements mirror this chaotic pattern, leaving beneficiaries waiting in uncertainty.

Signal trouble

When journalists recently quizzed IPS officer Alok Kumar who recently took over as head of Department of Prisons and Correctional Services on why mobile jammers were not doing their job at Parappana Agrahara, he responded with a first-hand anecdote from his own visit to the prison. Despite the jammers being in place, messages kept landing on his phone, prompting him to immediately call officials and issue a clear warning to fix the system. Flipping through his own career diary, Kumar recalled a similar problem from nearly 15 years ago when he was Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime), when service providers were pulled over persistent jammer failures and asked to correct them. While he admitted that technology has improved since then, he candidly observed

that the jail still falls within mobile network coverage, estimating that about 5 to 10 percent signal leakage continues even today. He said he has now directed the concerned agency to identify such vulnerable spots, while stressing that civilians living around the prison should not be made to suffer because of overzealous jamming.



Power play

Belagavi saw a bit of political theatre in the Assembly when CM Siddaramaiah, amid murmurs of leadership change and power-sharing within the Congress, declared with confidence that he is the Chief Minister now and will continue in the chair until the High Command desired. The remark, triggered during a discussion after a Congress MLA close to Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar raised an unrelated issue, quickly drew sharp reactions from the Opposition, which pressed him on whether the party high command had given the same five-year blessing. Siddaramaiah held his ground but added the familiar caveat, saying the Congress has a high command and its decision is final, even reiterating that the party would return to power in 2028, neatly mixing authority with allegiance and leaving the House buzzing with more political subtext than the debate itself.

— Sridhar Vivan



BM SIMPLY PUT

Do eggs cause cancer? Dispel fear and know the facts

Sunny side up



Eggs have long been seen as a simple, affordable health food, packed with protein and vital nutrients. Yet, a recent social media scare has raised questions about eggs being “cancer causing”. The claim has triggered confusion among consumers. Here is a clear, science based explainer that separates fact from fear.

What do experts have to say on this controversy?

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has clarified that there is no cancer risk from consuming eggs and there is no need for public concern. The FSSAI said nationwide testing of different egg samples found no scientific evidence to support the allegation. Dr. Naneboena Sunitha, dietician at Vasavi Hospitals said that moderate egg consumption combined with fiber-rich foods was completely safe. Instead, she highlighted that people can try alternative protein sources like fish, pulses, and soya there by stressing that overall diet, lifestyle, and mindset matter more than fear alone.

What is the recent concern about eggs and cancer?

A report claimed that a popular brand of eggs contained traces of AOZD (3 amino 2 oxazolidinone), a metabolite linked to the banned antibiotic group nitrofurans, leading to fears that eggs could cause cancer.

What exactly is AOZD?

AOZD is not a chemical added to eggs. It is a metabolite that can remain when certain antibiotics break down in the body. Nitrofurans were earlier used in veterinary medicine but are now banned in India and many other countries.

Is AOZD dangerous to health?

According to Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) norms, AOZD levels below 1 microgram per kg of food are considered safe. The reported level in eggs was around 0.73 microgram, well within the safe limit and medically insignificant.

Does eating eggs cause cancer?

No. There is no scientific or medical evidence to show that eating eggs causes cancer. Health experts clarify that cancer risk would arise only with prolonged consumption of food containing very high levels of harmful residues, which is not the case here.

Is it safe to eat one egg daily?

Yes. As per current Indian dietary patterns and nutritional guidelines, eating one egg daily is safe for healthy individuals and offers multiple health benefits.

Who benefits most from eating eggs?

Eggs are especially beneficial for people who exercise regularly, pregnant women, patients undergoing chemotherapy, and those recovering from illness. They help in tissue repair, muscle strength and immunity.

What nutrients do eggs provide?

Eggs are rich in high quality protein, Vitamin B12, Vitamin D, Vitamin A and essential amino acids. They support brain health, bone strength, eye health and muscle development.

Are eggs useful in specific medical conditions?

Yes. Egg whites are beneficial for patients with liver cirrhosis. Eggs also help people with cachexia, a condition involving muscle loss and weakness. They are useful for chemotherapy patients due to their easy digestibility and nutrient density.

What about cholesterol concerns?

People with high cholesterol should limit egg intake and consult a doctor, but for most individuals, moderate egg consumption does not increase heart disease risk.

How should eggs be safely consumed?

Choose clean, uncracked eggs. Wash before storing in the refrigerator. Prefer fully cooked eggs over half boiled ones. Always wash hands and utensils after handling raw eggs.

How many eggs do Indians consume compared to other countries?

India's per capita egg consumption is much lower than countries like the Netherlands, where a person consumes about 500 to 550 eggs a year. Indian consumption remains modest and within safe limits.

Has egg consumption dropped due to the scare?

No. Officials confirm that the report calling eggs cancer causing is baseless. Egg sales in the state remain stable, with monthly production at around 2.2 crore eggs, rising to nearly 3 crore during Christmas and New Year.

Is there a reason to panic?

Eggs are safe, nutritious and beneficial. There is no scientific evidence linking egg consumption to cancer. There is no need for panic. Eggs continue to remain a valuable part of a balanced Indian diet.

SOCIALTATTLE

THAT WENT VIRAL

Srihari Karanth
@sriharikarant

FPV drone walkthrough of Embassy Tech Village, Bellandur, one of Bengaluru's largest IT hubs.



1:29 PM · 20/12/25 · 39K Views

An X user shared a stunning FPV drone walkthrough of Embassy Tech Village, Bellandur, showcasing one of Bengaluru's largest IT hubs. The aerial tour impressed viewers with its smooth shots and scale, quickly racking up likes and comments.

WHAT'S TWEETING

A user on X praised the newly completed Hebbal Flyover remodeling and capacity augmentation, saying they drove through

Sunil H P @sunilho · 2h
Hebbal Flyover Remodeling and Capacity Augmentation is now complete. Drove through the new lane open for testing & kudos to @BDAOOfficialGok and @Captain_Mani72 for the frequent updates. Public projects need these badly.



Sunil H P @sunilho · 28/11/25
Update on the Hebbal flyover Loop Remodeling - 28-Nov-2025

4 14 101 8.3K

Manivannan P @Captai... · 32m

the new test lane and commended @BDAOOfficialGok and @Captain_Mani72 for the regular updates, emphasizing the need for such transparency in public projects.

An X user complained to @blrcitytraffic in Malleswaram, where footpaths are occupied by street vendors, leaving pedestrians navigating roads marked with BTP incident tape from 6th to 11th Cross, questioning public safety and practicality.

Tan@Jai sriram
@tanojv

New concept by @blrcitytraffic. Footpath for street vendors. Roads with BTP scene of incident tape for public to walk? @Jointcptraffic @bengaluruPost1 @ICCCBengaluru @Mvmtraffic ಸಂಪಿಗೆ road 6th cross till 11th cross, Malleswaram



Goon, aides barge in and assault couple at their home

A car wash attendant and his associates attacked a couple at their house in a BDA EWS apartment complex in Gunjur Palya late on Friday night. The Varthur police have filed a non-cognizable report.

The victims, Samrat Dafadar and Meem Begum, had just returned from their shop when the group, led by a man identified as Manju, arrived at their door in an inebriated state. After calling out Meem Begum's name, the men allegedly forced their way inside. When Samrat attempted to block their entry, he was dragged from the apartment and beaten.

The attackers unsuccessfully tried to snatch a gold chain from his neck. When Meem Begum intervened, she was struck in the face with a sharp object, resulting in bleeding.

Manju, a habitual offender, previously lived in the same apartment but was evicted for his unruly behavior. Since the couple moved in three months ago, Manju had reportedly been targeting them with lewd comments and harassment.

The couple noted that during Friday's attack despite their loud cries for help, none of their neighbours came to their assistance. **BMB**

Caste enquiries ruled beyond employer's jurisdiction

The Dharwad Bench of the Karnataka High Court has ruled that an employer has no authority to conduct an enquiry into the caste status of its employee, holding that such verification can only be undertaken by the competent statutory authorities.

Justice M Nagaprasanna delivered the ruling while allowing a petition filed by Raju Talwar, a Fire Station Officer posted in Karwar, who had challenged a notice issued by the Fire Force Department seeking to enquire into his caste status.

Talwar was initially appointed as a Fire Station Officer under the Other Backward Classes (OBC-I)

category, as his caste was classified under that category at the time of his appointment. However, on March 20, 2020, the Scheduled Tribes Order was amended, bringing the Talawar caste under the Scheduled Tribe category by including it as Entry No 38.

Subsequently, on October 29, 2022, the state government removed the Talawar caste from the list of backward classes, following its inclusion under the Scheduled Tribe category. Based on this change, Talwar sought promotion as a Scheduled Tribe candidate, which was granted in accordance with the applicable rules.

However, on January 29, 2025, the Regional Fire

Officer issued a notice calling upon Talwar to appear for an enquiry regarding his original appointment under the OBC category, despite the subsequent reclassification of his caste.

Challenging the notice before the High Court, Talwar argued that his employer lacked jurisdiction to verify or question his caste status, contending that such matters fall exclusively within the purview of statutory caste verification authorities.

Accepting the contention, the court observed that enquiries into caste status can only be conducted under the Karnataka Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes

(Reservation of Appointments, etc) Act, 1990. Justice Nagaprasanna noted that the Karnataka Fire Force Department is not among the authorities empowered under the Act to undertake such verification.

"The employer admittedly does not have the jurisdiction to enquire into the caste status of an employee. It should be by the District Caste Verification Committee only, which is the settled principle of law laid down by a plethora of judgments," the court said.

On this ground alone, the court held that the notice issued to the petitioner was unsustainable and allowed the petition. **BMB**

Rs 20,388 crore lost in 2025

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the amount involved jumped from ₹6,809 crore to ₹19,957 crore, a 193 percent increase. The state as a whole recorded a similar pattern: 22,478 cases in 2024 compared to 22,255 in 2023, with the total financial loss more than doubling from ₹8,732 crore to ₹25,626 crore. In 2025, 9,326 cases have been filed in Bengaluru within just 10.5 months, out of 13,000 cases across Karnataka, making the city the victim of nearly

72 percent of all cybercrime incidents in the state.

Financial impact

As per the data, the money lost to cyber fraud continues to rise faster than the number of cases, indicating that each incident is becoming costlier. Bengaluru accounted for ₹6,809 crore in 2023, ₹19,957 crore in 2024, and already ₹15,431 crore in 2025 up to mid-November. Statewide, the losses were ₹8,732 crore in 2023, ₹25,626 crore in 2024, and ₹20,388

crore in 2025. On an hourly basis, Bengaluruans were losing ₹7.75 lakh per hour in 2023, ₹22.7 lakh per hour in 2024, and ₹27.8 lakh per hour in 2025, highlighting a concerning upward trend in the financial severity of cybercrime.

Despite the enormous monetary losses, detection rates remain low. In 2023, Bengaluru detected only 5,066 out of 17,818 cases, a detection rate of 28.4 percent. In 2024, 2,872 of 17,863 cases were detected (16 percent), while in 2025, only 716 of 9,326 cases were detected, around 7.7 percent. Statewide, Karnataka's overall detection has similarly

declined over the three years, reflecting challenges in tracking increasingly sophisticated cybercriminal activities, as per the data.

Hotspot

Bengaluru consistently accounts for the majority of cyber frauds in Karnataka. In 2025, 71.7 percent of cases were reported in the city which was 75.7 percent of the total monetary losses, underscoring its role as the state's cybercrime hotspot. The concentration of IT infrastructure, high digital penetration, and increasing reliance on online financial transactions make the city a

prime target for cybercriminals.

Sandhya Dev, a cyber expert, said, "The rising financial impact per case and declining detection rates highlight the growing sophistication of cybercrime. While the number of complaints has remained relatively stable over the years, the value lost per incident has escalated, emphasising the need for stronger preventive measures, digital literacy, and real-time monitoring systems. If this trend continues, Bengaluruans could see losses exceeding ₹35 lakh per hour by the end of 2026, unless both authorities and citizens take stronger measures to combat cyber fraud."

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I, Shilpa Yogesh, R/O 240 and 340, B-1, DS Max Stonehill, Thulsiपुरa main road, anjanapura twp, Bangalore - 560062 have changed my minor child's name from Twisha S to Sunshine S

I, Nishat Fateema Abdul Basit Shaikh W/o Abdul Basit Shaikh, R/o Sunshine Apt, BTM 1st Stage, Bangalore 560029, have changed name to Nishat Fateema Farooqui

I Sahana Myaginakeri D/o Somaling Shivalingappa Myaginakeri Dob 29/08/2004, R/o 25, PP488 Ground floor 1st Cross 5th A Main Punnya-bhoomi Layout Kalkere Bangalore, changed my name as Sahana Somaling Myaginakeri.

I Shreya Myaginakeri D/o Somaling Shivalingappa Myaginakeri Dob 28/10/2007, R/o 25, PP488 Ground floor 1st Cross 5th A Main Punnya-bhoomi Layout Kalkere Bangalore, changed my name as Shreya Somaling Myaginakeri.

I Saathvik Myaginakeri S/o Somaling Shivalingappa Myaginakeri Dob 03/05/2006, R/o 25, PP488 Ground floor 1st Cross 5th A Main Punnya-bhoomi Layout Kalkere Bangalore, changed my name as Saathvik Somaling Myaginakeri.

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BANGKOK PATTAYA 5 DAYS JAN: 20 FEB: 11, 26

BHUTAN 8 DAYS FEB: 24 / NEPAL & MUKTINATH 8 DAYS MAR: 10

SRI LANKA 7 DAYS JAN: 19 FEB: 2, 16

VIETNAM 8 DAYS JAN: 13 / BALI 7 DAYS JAN: 10, 31

HONG KONG MACAU SHENZHEN 7 DAYS FEB: 10 MAR: 15

CHINA (SHANGHAI BEIJING XI'AN) 9 DAYS MAR: 23, APR: 10

ANDAMAN 6 DAYS JAN: 27 FEB: 16 MAR: 2

Schools, colleges seek NGO help for sanitary napkins

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for 2025-26. He added that the Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Limited (KSMSCCL) has already floated a tender for procurement of sanitary pads.

Under the Shuchi scheme, each eligible student is entitled to 12 Shuchi kits annually, with each kit containing 10 sanitary napkins. For the year 2025-26, the State government has identified 19,64,507 beneficiaries, and the total expenditure on the scheme is estimated at Rs 71.83 crore.

In the absence of fresh supplies, the department distributed sanitary pads during July and August 2025 using leftover stock from the previous academic year. With the earlier academic year having concluded in most institutions, many students have reportedly been left without access to free sanitary napkins and have been compelled to purchase them on their own.

The disruption in supply has also prompted several schools and colleges to seek assistance from non-governmental organisations to ensure availability of sanitary napkins for students until the government procurement is completed.

Make the switch

"School-going girls are increasingly exploring menstrual cups reflects growing menstrual awareness and sustainability. Menstrual cups offer longer wear time, lower

long-term cost, reduced waste, and fewer skin irritations as compared to pads," said Dr Snehadarshini Karanth, gynaecologist and IVF Specialist, Birla Fertility and IVF. She said that initial discomfort, learning proper insertion, and access to clean sanitation can be some of the challenges to its use.

"Common taboos about menstrual cups include fears around virginity, hygiene, and removal, all of which are medically unfounded," said Dr Karanth. "Menstrual cups are safe, do not affect the hymen, and can empower young girls to manage periods confidently while promoting body literacy, comfort, and environmental responsibility," she explained.

According to Dr Rubina Shanawaz, Gynecology and Uro-Gynecology, Fortis Hospital, menstrual cups should be introduced gradually. "For a school-going girl, who has just attained puberty, the idea of bleeding itself is overwhelming. So when you ask her to insert something inside the vagina, they are not going to take to it easily.

After a year or two of them getting used to the fact of having periods once in a month and knowing how to maintain the genital hygiene, slowly we can, at the ages of 15 or 16, introduce them to the menstrual cup and show them how eco-friendly it is. The cost is also much lesser to the family, and they can avoid the

rashes too," opined Dr Shanawaz. "And children who are into sports can go ahead and play without any disruption to their normal activities," she added.

"The taboos associated revolve around mindset, though it has been done since ages for swimmers with tampons. This is just a variation of the tampon, but yes, much much safer," she said.

The Department of Health and Family Welfare selected Dakshina Kannada and ChamaraJanagara as pilot districts in 2022-23 to implement the Shuchi - 'Nanna Maithri' menstrual cup project, aimed at promoting safe and sustainable menstrual hygiene practices.

Under the pilot, around 15,000 beneficiaries—students studying in first and second year Pre-University Colleges—were identified to be introduced to the use of scientific, reusable menstrual cups.

As part of the pilot rollout, menstrual cups were distributed to 300 beneficiaries during the project's inauguration at BR Hills. Subsequently, the department compiled a report based on feedback from the participants.

The report revealed that 272 students had accepted the menstrual cups and were actively using them. Encouraged by the positive response, the department proposed a second phase of implementation, with plans to scale up the project across both pilot districts.



Christmas can be hard. For some people, it increases loneliness, grief, hopelessness and family tension, and the festive season has a way of turning ordinary concerns into urgent ones. Not because something terrible is guaranteed to happen, but because more is often at stake: money, time, family dynamics, travel and expectations.

A large study found a small but consistent dip in people's wellbeing in the run-up to Christmas. One psychological process that often shows up under this pressure is worry.

It helps to separate worry from anxiety, because although they feel similar, they are not the same. Worry is mostly a thought process, often taking the form of "what if" questions such as "what if I don't make everyone happy?" or "what if the cooking goes wrong?". It tends to be negative and focused on the future.

Anxiety, by contrast, is the body's threat system revving up. People may experience it as tension, dread, a racing heart or a churning stomach. But there is another part of worry that is particularly important. The issue is rarely the first "what if" thought. It is what happens next.

A psychological approach called metacognitive therapy focuses on the beliefs people hold about worrying itself. These beliefs can quietly determine whether worry passes quickly or turns into a long spiral.

Some beliefs sound reassuring or even helpful. Research has identified positive beliefs such as "worrying helps me prepare", "worrying stops bad things from happening", or "worrying shows I care".

Others are more openly distressing. Negative beliefs include thoughts such as "my worrying is uncontrollable" or "my worrying is dangerous".

Together, these beliefs can keep worry going by making it feel urgent, important and impossible to step away from.

When worry feels urgent and uncontrollable, people often try to manage it in ways that backfire: answering one "what if" with another, seeking repeated reassurance, misusing alcohol, or trying to block thoughts altogether.

Don't worry, be merry



How to deal with worry this Christmas

Interrupting the worry pattern

One way to interrupt this pattern is to catch worry early and picture it as a text message.

A worry thought arrives like a message on your phone: What if the dinner goes wrong? What if they spoil things? What if they are disappointed with the gift?

You did not choose for the message to arrive.

Thoughts often appear automatically. But the message contains a link and invites you to click on it. Clicking the link leads to prolonged worrying, rising anxiety and attempts to solve unsolvable problems at 2am.

The key point is this: you may not control which messages arrive, but you can learn not to click every link. That is the most controllable part of worry.

A technique designed to do this is called "worry postponement", and it is more evidence based than it sounds. Studies and reviews show that postponing worry, or confining it to a specific time window,

can reduce overall worry levels.

The idea is simple. You are postponing engagement with worry, not pretending it is not there. Pick a daily "worry slot" that is not just before bed. Five to ten minutes is enough.

When a worry message arrives outside that window, do something small but deliberate:

notice it, name it as worry, and postpone it. For example:

"That's a worry message. I'll deal with it at 7.30pm." If it returns later, do the same again: notice, name, postpone.

When 7.30pm arrives, you can engage with the worry if you choose, but only for the agreed time.

Many people forget to use the slot at all, or find that after a day of postponing worry they feel less motivated to start worrying.

Evidence suggests that learning to control your response to worry reduces its power.

Another helpful step is questioning beliefs about the usefulness of worry.

Study finds consistent dip in people's wellbeing in the run-up to Christmas — one psychological process that shows up under this pressure is worry

Worry often masquerades as protection. It can feel like it prevents disappointment, shows how much you care, or keeps bad things from happening.

One study found that over 90% of people's worries, as logged day to day, did not come true.

Even when the issue is real, such as money or a difficult family situation, worry is not the same as dealing with the problem. Studies suggest that getting stuck in worry can make people less clear, less confident and more anxious than approaching the issue in a practical, step-by-step way:

If the task is preparation, planning works better than worrying.

If the task is avoiding conflict, setting a boundary is more effective than worrying.

If the task is showing care, actions matter more than worry.

Reframing these beliefs as another kind of scam message can make worry feel less convincing and less worth clicking on.

Christmas can be a difficult time, with heightened pressures and expectations. Learning not to click every worry link can make it more manageable. It is a skill for life, not just for Christmas.

(By Robin Bailey, University of Cambridge, The Conversation)

MIND, BODY & HEART



All you need to know about...

How to switch off

Mindfulness Moments In The Morning

Mindful women start the day with a few minutes dedicated to meditation. Sitting quietly and breathing with focus or practising a guided meditation reduces scattered thoughts and anchors the mind.

Why You Should Try This:

This pause in the morning creates a buffer before the chaos of the day, and lets you approach challenges with more clarity and patience.

Off-Digital For An Hour

A 'digital detox hour' every day can help you step away from the overwhelm of overstimulation. Just turn off phones, laptops, and TVs.

Why You Should Try This:

Taking this break will lower mental noise, reduce eye strain, and help you relax.

Time For Herbal Tea

Tea drinking can become a mindful ritual that helps you switch off. Tea taps into all the senses, and helps you relax naturally. Pick a herbal tea such as chamomile, lavender, or peppermint to calm you down.

Why You Should Try This:

This can become a comforting self-care practice that will help you slow down and introspect for peace.

Walking Amid Nature

Spending time outdoors can be profoundly healing. Walking amid nature provides a break from digital distractions and urban noise.

Why You Should Try This:

Immersing yourself in nature restores emotional balance, and walking has added health benefits.

Journaling

The ritual of writing down their thoughts and feelings at the end of the day helps many women release stress in a healthy manner. Journaling helps women to recognise patterns, process emotions, and distance themselves from anxieties.

Why You Should Try This:

This reflective practice helps you free up mental space and relax.

—Femina



MIRRORLIGHTS

Why you should apply body oil before showering in December

December's cold air, low humidity and long hot showers can quickly leave your skin feeling dry, tight and dull. While most winter routines focus on moisturizing after a shower, one of the most effective steps actually begins before you step in.

Applying body oil beforehand creates a protective layer that prevents moisture loss, keeps your natural oils intact and leaves your skin softer and more comfortable. This simple switch can make a big difference, helping your skin stay healthy and glowing all month long!

It Shields Your Skin From Winter Dryness

Using body oil before showering creates a protective layer that saves your skin from the harsh effects of December weather. Cold winds and low humidity draw moisture out of the skin faster than usual and hot showers make it worse.

When you apply oil first, it forms a barrier that stops this moisture loss and prevents your natural oils from being stripped away. As a result, your skin feels softer and far less prone to dryness or tightness, even after a

long, warm shower.

It Helps Lock In Deep Moisture

Warm water helps oils absorb more effectively, which means pre-shower oiling boosts your skin's ability to hold onto hydration. Instead of the water drying your skin out, the oil helps seal moisture in and improves the way your skin feels immediately after bathing.

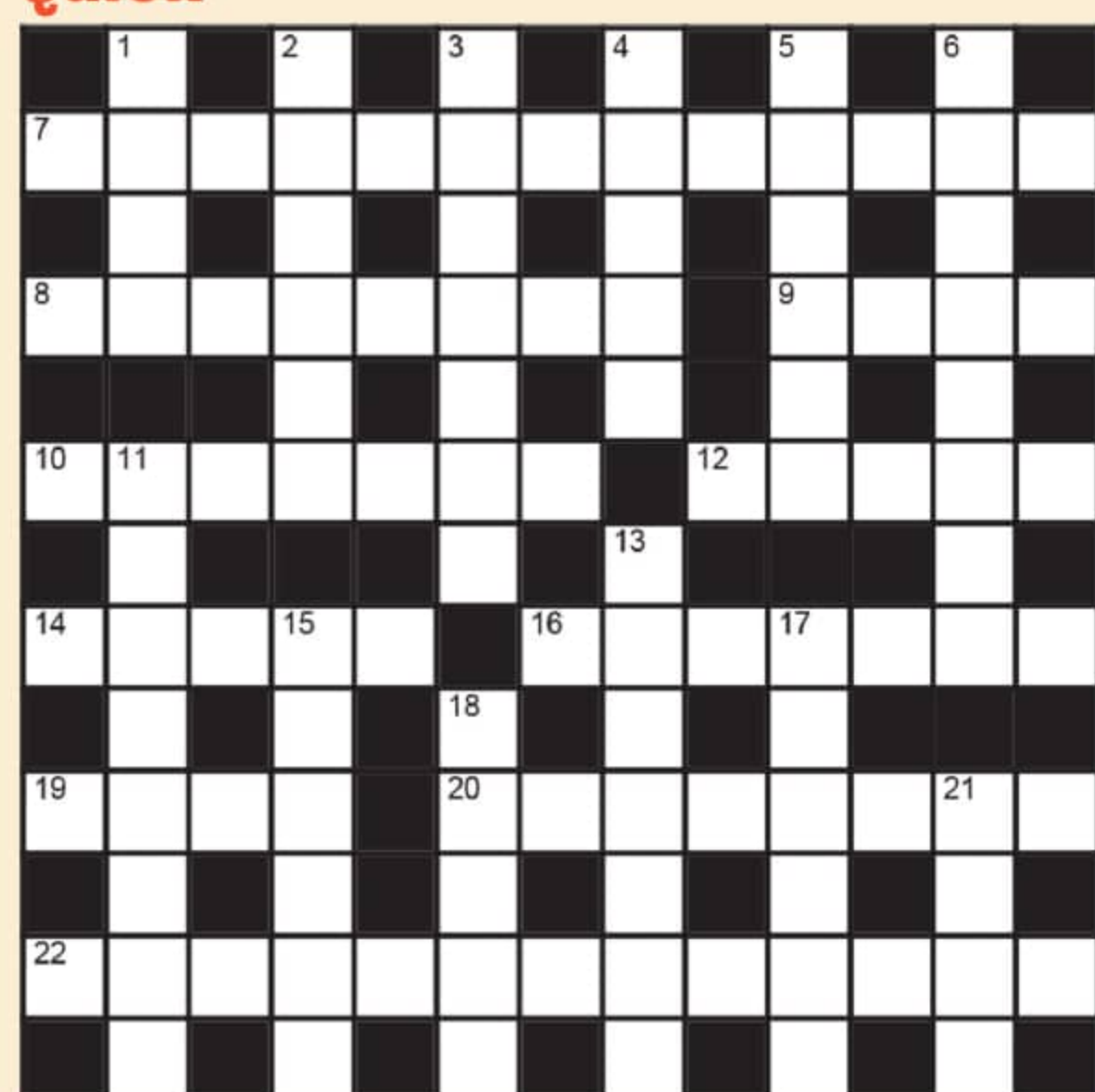
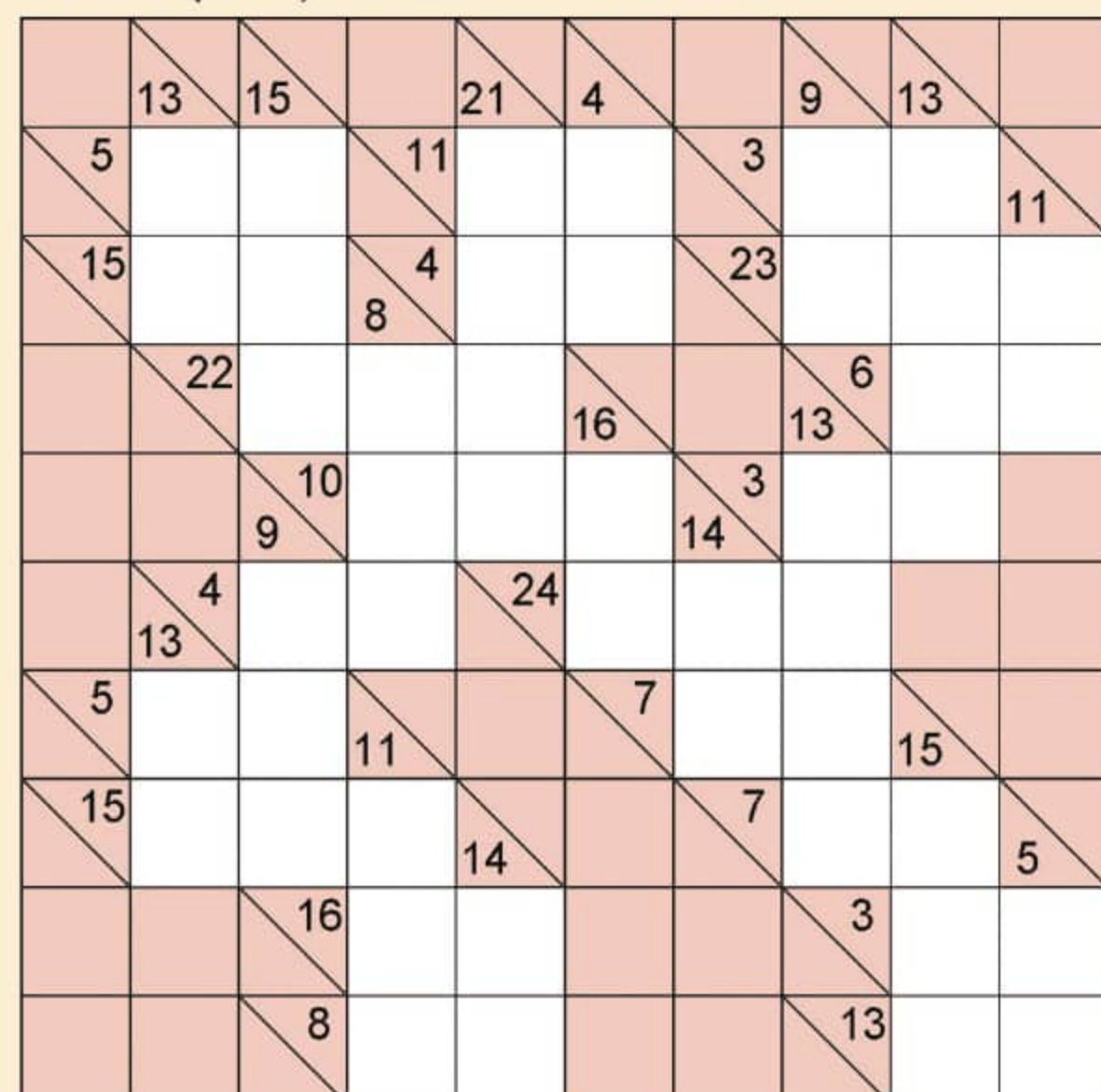
You'll notice that your skin becomes smoother, more supple and stays hydrated for longer hours. This simple step also enhances the performance of your post-shower lotion, since your skin is already

nourished and prepped.

Makes Your Shower Feel More Spa-Like and Relaxing

Adding body oil before your shower instantly makes your routine feel more luxurious. As the warm water hits the skin, the oil melts beautifully, releasing a comforting fragrance and turning a regular shower into a calming, spa-like experience.

It helps relax tired muscles, reduces the feeling of winter stress and leaves your skin feeling pampered. This one extra step can transform your entire winter routine into something soothing, indulgent and enjoyable. —Femina



- 7 Unfeasible (13)
- 8 An advantageous purchase (1,4,3)
- 9 A ray of light (4)
- 10 The papacy or papal court (4,3)
- 12 Send money (5)
- 14 Outdoor parties (5)
- 16 Gaping or staring at (7)
- 19 Bollywoods Anupam ____ (4)
- 20 Revolt, rebellion or mutiny (8)
- 22 In a vexingly inconveniencing way (13)

- 1 Polluted air (4)
- 2 Religious house (6)
- 3 Contagious skin disease causing itching (7)
- 4 Tripoli is its capital (5)
- 5 Place a bet (6)
- 6 German shepherd (8)
- 11 33.33% generally speaking? (3,5)
- 13 Most beloved (7)
- 15 Severe scolding (6)
- 17 Begin again (6)
- 18 City in North Karnataka (5)
- 21 and void ? (4)

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: C EQUALS P
RMT IOSSTLR VILREFJT RV
YTEJRM OL WTEH. CTVCJT EHT
EWHEON RV RMOPZ IOS, IBR
OW KVB RMOPZ LGEJJ, KVB
VPJK EFMOTXT LGEJJ RMOPSL.

**Was that an earthquake
or did you
just rock my world?**

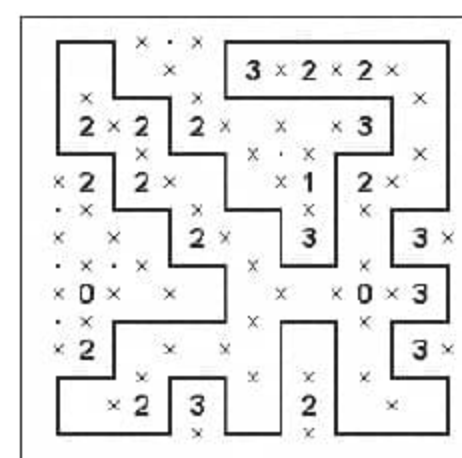
**Love will find a way.
Indifference will find
an excuse**

I don't think cops should wear mirrored sunglasses; the whole time the guy was chewing me out, all I could think was "I should cut my hair."

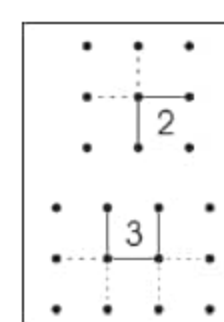
» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

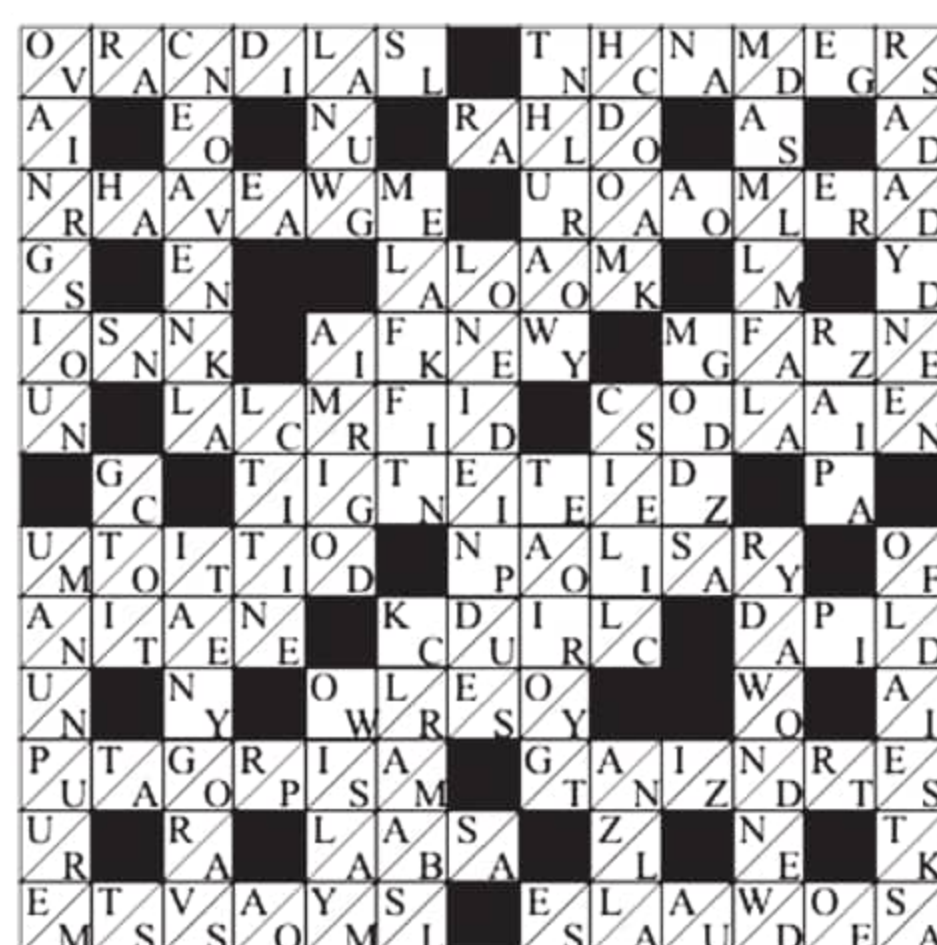
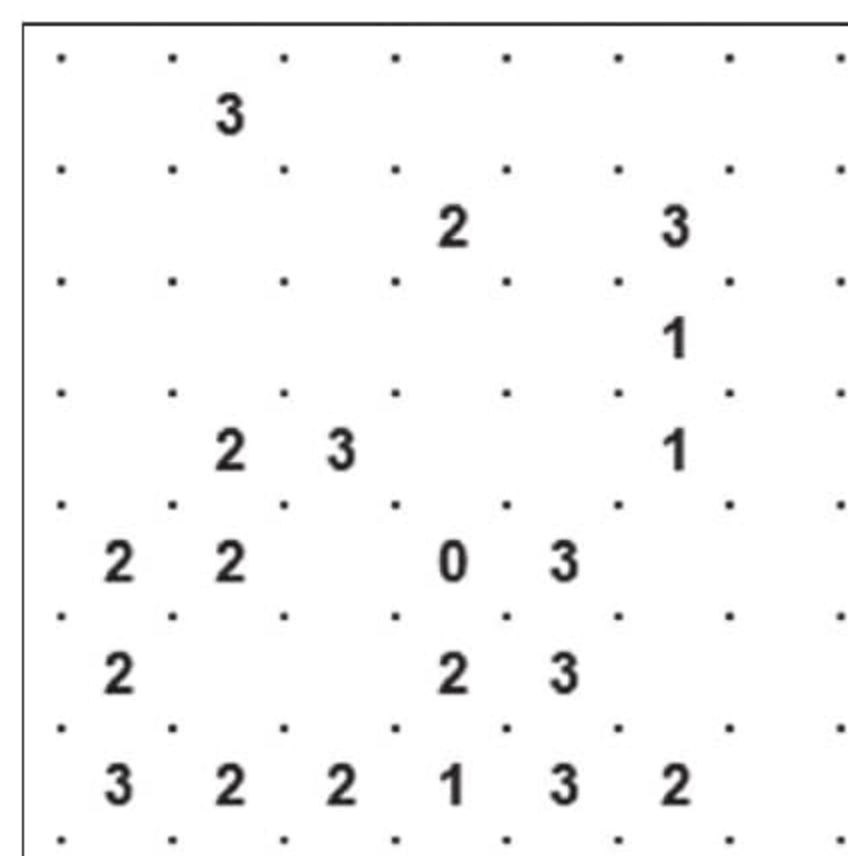
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



(Fig A)

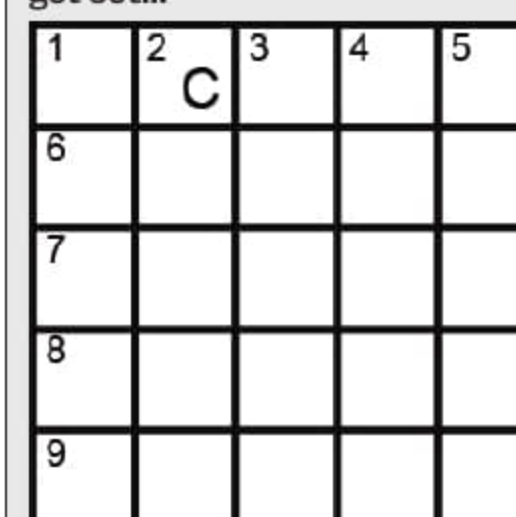


(Fig B)
Not
Allowed



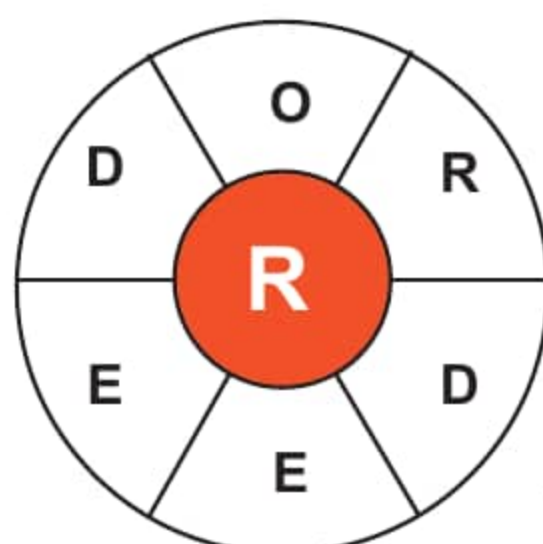
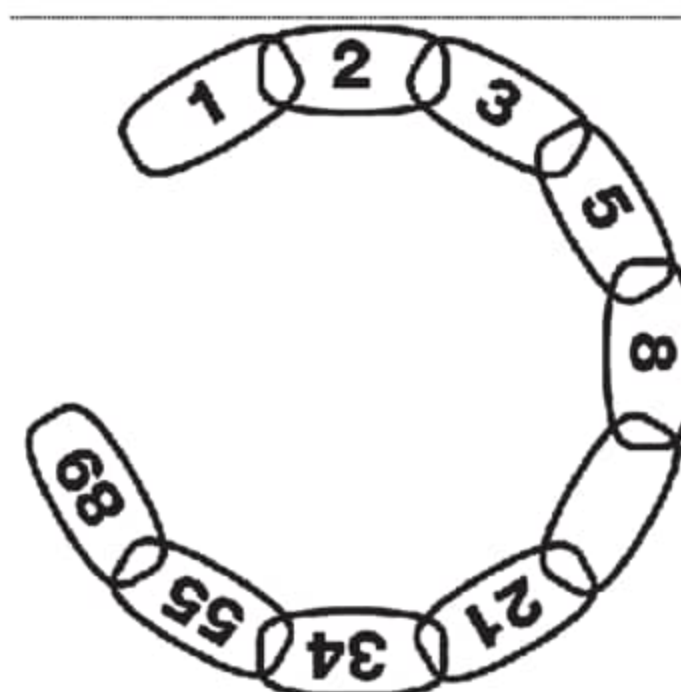
This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



DOWN
1 As she; 2 Coy up;
3 He rap; 4 Hoper;
5 D-days

Which number completes the chain?



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

08 Average; 09 Good; 11 Outstanding

Sudoku Challenge



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

= 6

2 2 3 3

							= 30
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	------

3 3 7 9

							= 25
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	------

3 4 8 5



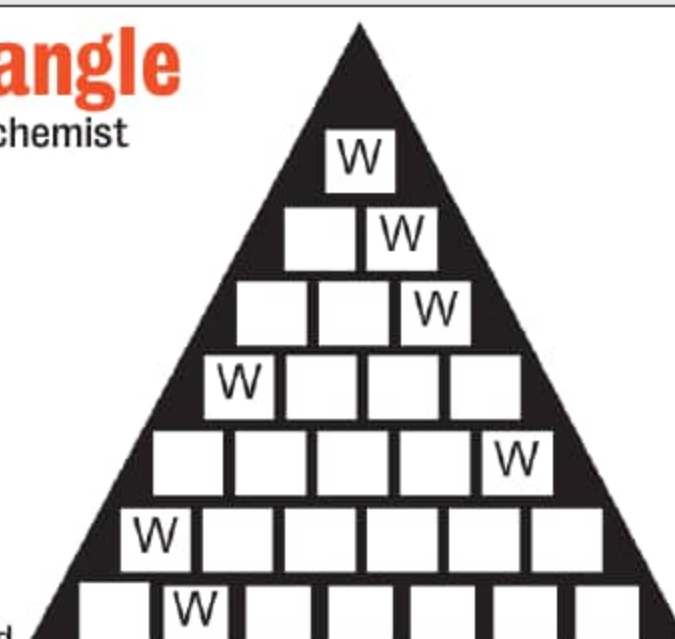
Find at least six differences in details between panels



Differences: 1. Slipper is different. 2. Lamp base is different. 3. Tree is smaller. 4. Nose is smaller. 5. Dial is turned. 6. Flowerpot is different.

The chubby fellow, swinging slow, Not on a jungle vine. Taken from his leafy home, But not for jam or wine. Has lost its weight while soaking rays, Then joining you to dine. Who or what is he?

- 1 Tungsten for the chemist
- 2 An interjection
- 3 Uncooked
- 4 Skin growth
- 5 Drinking-tube
- 6 Irrigates
- 7 Jumper



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be

made at each step answering to the clue given.

COMICS

Popeye



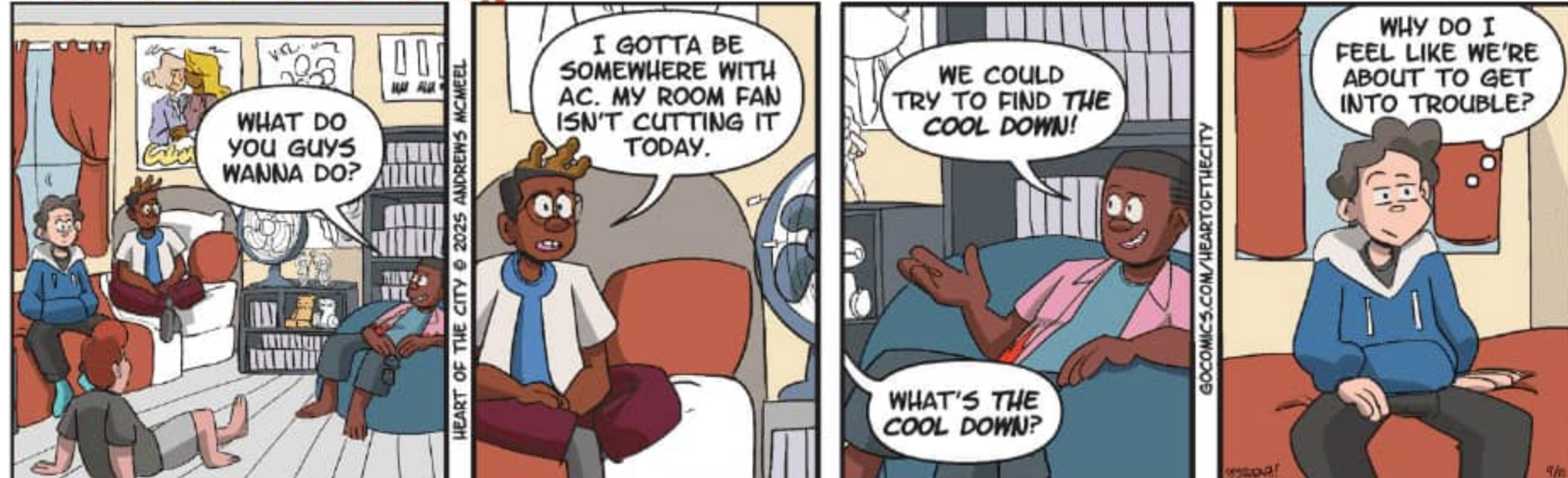
Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankshaft



Mutts



WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR



If it's your birthday today

Happy Birthday! The determined Capricorn embraces the solstice, marking a powerful turn toward tangible achievement. Your focus narrows on long-term legacy and professional structure. Do not shy away from hard work; it is your birthright and your greatest tool. Take calculated risks, but ensure every step builds towards an unshakeable foundation.

Aries Mar 21-Apr 20

Verify information carefully today, rumours may mislead. Focus on work and maintain determination, ignoring distracting gossip. Your resolve becomes unstoppable when you prioritise tasks and trust clear, verified facts.



Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

Communicate clearly to prevent misunderstandings, speak your needs plainly. Taking initiative in conversations avoids confusion and strengthens relationships; clear expression helps achieve your goals.



Sagittarius Nov 23-Dec 22

Keep persevering even if results seem slow, recognition will follow. Your persistent efforts build a foundation others may not yet see. Trust time; eventual appreciation validates steady commitment and long-term vision.



Taurus Apr 21-May 20

You hold the strength to finish tasks and organise chaos today. Tie up loose ends, declutter life, and create order, this effort will free your mind and build a clearer foundation for future progress.



Virgo Aug 24-Sep 23

Consider travel to reconnect with someone you miss; a brief trip refreshes goals and aligns perspective. Stepping into a new environment can relieve stress and reveal clarity regarding priorities and aspirations.



Capricorn Dec 23-Jan 20

Surround yourself with supportive people when money worries weigh on you. Positive company eases anxiety and uplifts mood. Social encouragement reinforces motivation and helps you maintain perspective during financial stress.



Gemini May 21-Jun 21

Let go of attachments that no longer serve you. Embrace fresh starts by releasing outdated ties to people, places, or possessions. Creating space invites renewal, clarity, and opportunities for growth and change.



Libra Sep 24-Oct 22

Actively pursue your dreams, don't wait for chance. Take practical steps to achieve long-held goals, transforming aspiration into action. Progress demands initiative; begin now to manifest ambitions over time.



Aquarius Jan 21-Feb 19

Focus on health, exercise and self-care boost wellbeing. Reward yourself modestly for good habits to stay motivated. Prioritising fitness today supports energy and resilience for upcoming responsibilities and ambitions.



Cancer Jun 22-July 23

Exciting plans from partners emerge, listen, collaborate, and plan carefully. Honest input strengthens shared ventures and increases the likelihood of success. Work together to develop strategies for long-term positive impact.



Scorpio Oct 23-Nov 22

Review your spending and cut unnecessary expenses today. Prioritise saving for emergencies to avoid future strain. Financial discipline now provides security and peace of mind when unexpected needs arise later.



Pisces Feb 20-Mar 20

Love brightens your day, expect positive romantic news or gestures. Stay open to affection and allow joy in. Heartfelt surprises may deepen connections and spark renewed warmth in personal relationships today.



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KIDZONE



Siya, Bengaluru



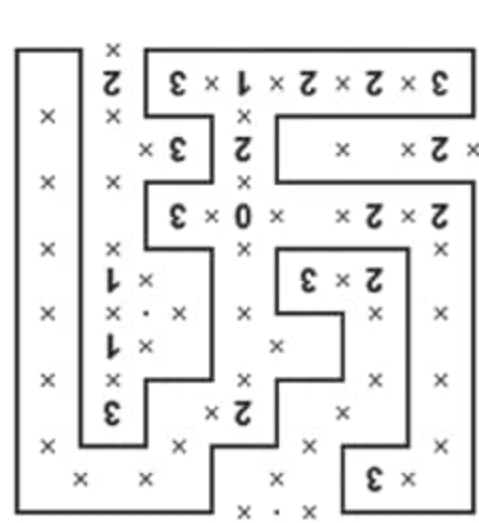
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SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



LOOP



ALPHA



SUDOKU



MENSA PUZZLE



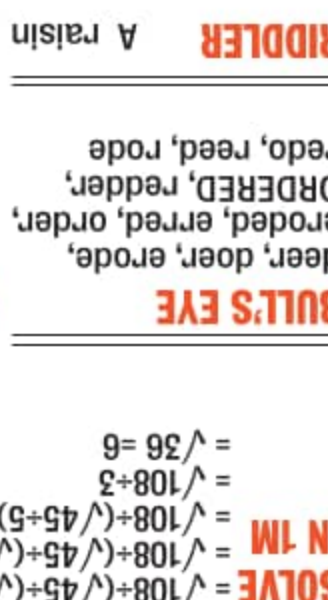
QUICK



STRIKE OUT



FAST FIVE



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